



Belonging and Excellence for All (BE4ALL) is a joint effort by SMART, SMACNA, and the ITI to create an industry-wide culture where everyone is welcome and belongs, including those from historically underrepresented groups, and where we all strive for the highest standards of performance and professionalism, resulting in a thriving unionized sheet metal industry that affirms the dignity and worth of us all. These Toolbox Talks are in support of this mission.

BE4ALL Toolbox Talk

Sexism in the Workplace

What Is Sexism?

Sexism, a form of gender bias, is any kind of prejudice, discrimination, or stereotyping based on a person's gender. Examples of sexist behavior include (but are not limited to) making derogatory comments and jokes, excluding or mistreating someone based on their gender, making inappropriate or lude gestures, and not offering equal opportunities based on one's gender.

The Impact of Sexism

Our industry must strive to create a culture that welcomes everyone. Failing to create a welcoming environment for all tradespeople can have many negative outcomes, including the following:

- **Individuals** may feel stress, anxiety, and a loss of confidence. Sex-based discrimination may result in feeling unwelcome or even unsafe on the job site, which could have impacts on performance and most importantly on safety.
- **Teams** may experience a lack of communication and trust, as well as increased conflict and decreased morale. Where there could be strength and collaboration, there will instead be resentment and noncooperation.
- **Organizations** may face damage to their reputation and even legal liabilities. This may result in difficulty attracting skilled workers, and lower retention rates.

How to Address and Prevent Sexism in the Workplace

- **Identify:** Learn to spot sexism, whether it is obvious or covert. Sexism can be as blunt as someone saying, "You are not built for the trades" when addressing a certain individual or group of individuals. However, it can also happen quietly and discreetly – for example, someone consistently getting overlooked for leadership roles or other forms of career advancement despite having the skills.
- **Educate:** Educate yourself and others on how sexism negatively affects the working environment. Unlearn harmful stereotypes and keep an open mind regarding the abilities of all people, regardless of gender. Encourage others to do the same.
- **Speak up:** If someone is experiencing harassment, do not turn a blind eye. If you hear or witness sexism to any degree, call it out. Often, people feel they can get away with bad behavior because no one ever bothers to stand up to them.
- **Offer Support:** Let people know that you are there to provide support and encouragement. Building trust among a team is an important part of preventing a toxic environment.



We thrive on solidarity. By treating everyone with respect, we strengthen our collective power and reputation.

For guidance on preventing and handling workplace discrimination or harassment, check out our Rapid Response Protocol here:

<https://www.beforall.org/rapid-response-protocol/>

Staff Conversation & Notes:

Reflect on how your words and actions contribute to the workplace culture. Have you been helping to create a welcoming environment, or is there room for you to make improvements?

What are steps you can take if you encounter or witness sexism in your workplace?



Use the link below or scan the QR code to fill out a survey to win a BE4ALL Tool Pouch!

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BE4ALL Toolbox Talk Participation Sheet

Employer: _____

Presenter: _____

Location: _____

Date: _____

Participant	Initials

Participant	Initials



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